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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the order in which subject, verb, and quote come in sentences in the children's stories about Babar by Jean and Laurent de Brunhoff. It suggests that different constructions have different functions that are exploited by the author for communicative purposes. The paper adds that the order in which these elements appear affects the complexity of the text and thereby affects reading comprehension. (TJ)

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Technical Report No. 143

ON THE DISCOURSE STRUCTURE OF DIRECT QUOTATION

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On the Discourse Structure of Direct Quotation

> There are situations where the speaker is constrained by a grammatical rule, and there are situations where he chooses according to his meaning . . .; but there are no situations in the system where "it makes no difference" which way you go . . . This is just another way of saying that every contrast a language permits to survive is relevant, some time or other. (Bolinger, 1972, p. 71)

Introduction

In this paper I would like to provide evidence for the correctness of this claim with respect to three types of direct quotation in written English as exemplified in (1)-(3).[1]

(1) Mary said, "I may arrive late." Subject Verb Quote (SVQ)

(2) "I may arrive late," Mary said, Quote Subject Verb (QSV)

(3) "I may arrive late," said Mary. Quote Verb Subject (QVS)

The above sentences are all synonymous: i.e., they have the same truth conditions and express the same informational content. In this paper I wish to show that a writer's choice of position for the quote and the subject of the verb of saying is not random and unmotivated, but that the various syntactic patterns in (1)-(3) have different discourse functions and different domains of use.

In other words I would like to describe the communicative functions of the above sentence types was observe how writers exploit these functions to signal to the reader what the main point of a narrative is: What is new versus old information; What belongs to the "core" part of the story

(i.e., elements which directly advance the narrative action) versus "window dressing" (i.e., elements which are not essential or important in developing the story). My claim then is, that sentences like (2) and (3) above are not merely optional or stylistic variants of (1), but that all three sentence types have their own raison d'etre and have different distributions in narratives due to the different pragmatic functions they can be used to serve. Evidence for these claims constitute the main part of this paper.

The data for this study come primarily from five children's stories from the Babar Series (by Jean & Laurent de Brunhoff). An investigation of these and other children's stories shows a frequent occurrence of all three types of direct quotations, type 3 (QVS order) being by far the most frequent type.

It is clear therefore what the relevance of this work for the study of reading comprehension is. If children's narratives contain a large number of the constructions discussed in this paper, then a study of the functions and uses of these constructions is necessary if one is interested in characterizing what kind of knowledge children must have in order to comprehend the texts they are reading. It is claimed below that the various types of direct quotation serve different pragmatic functions which are used by the writer to communicate to her readers a number of things about the narrative. It is assumed then, that children would be able to 'decode' these rhetorical effects. Therefore, any theory interested in describing the process of a child's reading comprehension will first of all have to give an accurate account of the functions and uses of the

constructions occurring in children's literature. This work is then an attempt to characterize as accurately as possible one type of construction children will have to deal with when reading a narrative. More specific questions raised by this study for reading comprehension will be discussed in the concluding paragraph.

Before proceeding let me describe the terminology used in this paper. I will call sentences like (1) above prequotes, (2) I will call non-inverted postquotes and (3) inverted postquotes (regardless of whether part of or the entire quote has been preposed).[2] The terminology of pre- and post- then refers to the position of the quotation frame (i.e., the clause giving the speaker and mode of saying). In prequotes the quotation frame precedes the quote, in postquotes the quotation frame comes after the quote. In what follows, I will discuss the two rules of quote preposing and subject-verb inversion. First, I will try to explain what the function of each rule is (or more correctly, what some of the functions of the rule are). Next, I will state the generalizations about the use of the constructions, citing the data from the Babar books. I will conclude with a short discussion about the validity of these generalizations for written English.

Prequotes and Postquotes

I shall start by asking what the function of the rule is which preposes a direct quote, or part of it.[3]

According to Hooper and Thompson (1973) the function of direct quote preposing is similar to that of complement preposing, which derives sentences like (5) from (4):

(4) I think that syntax and semantics are related.

(5) Syntax and semantics are related, I think.

The function of these rules is "to give the complement sentence added importance by moving it to the beginning of the sentence. Since the complementizer is not present, the preposed sentence is taken as the main assertion and thus receives more emphasis than if it were in the usual complement position" (Hooper & Thompson, 1973, p. 470).

There are several problems with this view of the function of direct quote preposing.

First of all, it is not clear to me whether the quote is in fact embedded, i.e., whether it is a complement and therefore moving it to the front makes it "less" embedded and more of a main clause. Emonds (1970) observes that the reported sentence in direct discourse is similar to the highest S in a tree in that it allows root transformations, which are for Emonds restricted to main clauses. Thus, even with nonpreposed direct quotes we can get sentences like (6, a-c) where root transformations have applied in the direct quote-part of the sentence:

(6)(a) Harry said, "Never have I had to borrow money."

(b) Harry said, "Here comes John Smith."

(c) Harry said, "My daughters, I am proud of."

Secondly, even if we assumed that the preposing serves the function of putting the quote in a "main assertion" position, how could we then explain the fact that in some cases only a part of the direct quote is

preposed? Generally speaking, if the quote has a number of sentences, only the first sentence is preposed (it does not seem to matter whether the sentences are conjoined by connectors like and or but, or separate):

(7) "Be patient, Babar," whispers Celeste. "We will not remain long with the circus. We will get back to our native land again somehow and see Cornelius and Little Arthur." (The Travels of Babar)

(8) "I'm so glad to see you," he says, "But the red bag--it got away." (Babar Loses His Crown)

As we see in (8), only part of the quote is preposed, and the root transformation of left dislocation applies in the part which is not preposed. Sometimes only part of a sentence is preposed, as in (9)-(10):

(9) "But now," adds Arthur, "now that we know them, we can telephone them." (Babar visits another Planet)

Here the preposed part is not a whole sentence or clause, moreover part of it is repeated in the second part of the quote.

(10) "According to my calculations," says Babar, "this planet is unknown. Whatever will we find here?!" (Babar visits another Planet)

In (10) it is not clear that according to my calculations is the main assertion of the sentence. Whatever 'main assertion' means (and I'm not sure Hooper and Thompson clearly define what it means), the preposed part of the quote is just an adverbial modifier to this planet is unknown, which seems to be the main message of the quote.

Other examples where the preposed part of the quote does not seem to be the main assertion include the following:

(11) "Truly," says Arthur, "These elephants with curly ears know how to live." (Babar visits another Planet)

(12) "Alas!" replies Cornelius, "the Rhinoceroses have declared war on us . . . ." (The Travels of Babar)

I would like to make a slightly different claim about the function of the preposing. The function is not to put the quote in a position where it receives "added importance," but to remove the non-quote part from sentence initial position, thus bringing the sentence closer to a 'real life' conversation. This function is close to the way Fowler in his Dictionary of Modern English Usage describes direct quotes:

> The fact is that readers want to know what was said, and the frame into which a remark or a speech is fitted is indifferent to them: or rather the virtue of frames is not that they should be various, but that they should be inconspicuous. (Fowler, p. 239)

I suggest that removing the quotation frame (i.e., the nonquote part) from sentence initial position serves this function, whether the frame ends up at the end of the whole sentence or in the middle. This view of the function of direct quote preposing predicts that the most frequent and unmarked case should be that where part or all of the quote has been preposed; i.e., the most natural case when reporting a remark, dialogue or speech is to start off with the quote, and then later mention the

'frame,' due to the fact that in most cases when reporting what somebody said, the writer is more interested in communicating what the character said and not in who made the statement.[4] This is in fact supported by the data from the Babar books: out of 130 quotes, only 33 were prequotes (25%), and a decisive majority (75%) were cases where direct quote preposing has applied.

This principle of the writer trying to imitate a real-life conversation would predict that direct quote preposing should apply in all cases except when there is some independent reason for the frame to appear before the quote. Below, I will look at the cases from the Babar books where the frame precedes the quote and will try to show what principles determine this distribution; i.e., I will try to investigate what these 'independent reasons' are which could force a writer to put the quotation frame before the quote. As shown below, some of the principles have to do with different levels of discourse structure, while others are due to purely syntactic reasons. What follows is then a list of prequote cases, subcategorized by what I believe to be the reason for this particular clause order.

(i) At the beginning of a story or scene, when the characters are introduced for the first time, the tendency is to use only prequotes and not start with a direct quote:

(13) One day Babar said to General Cornelius, Doctor Capoulosse and Podular, the sculptor: "My dear friends, we shall soon be celebrating the anniversary of the founding of Celesteville, the elephants' city . . . . " (Babar's Fair)

(14) Cornelius, who is chief over all the elephants when the king is away, anxiously sighs, "I do hope they don't have any accidents." (The Travels of Babar)

Thus, it might be that the most "logical" beginning of a story (as in (13)) is to give the time, location, characters involved and only then report what the characters say. In (14) Cornelius is introduced for the first time, and his status is described, which is as central to the story as what he has to say.

The same is true when there is a change in scene and the character first appears in that scene:

(15) In the gardens at Celesteville, the city of the elephants, Babar says, "Yes, this is certainly a wully-wully. He is very gentle and quite lovable." (Babar and the Wully-Wully)

In (15) it would be much less natural to prepose the quote:

(16) "Yes, this is certainly a wully-wully," says Babar in the gardens at Celesteville, the city of the elephants. "He is very gentle looking and quite lovable."

Once the characters have been introduced, one can freely prepose quotes. Thus, Babar and the Wully-Wully starts off by giving the setting.

(17) In the country of the elephants, Pom, Flora, and Alexander, the children of King Babar and Queen Celeste are taking a stroll. Suddenly they find themsleves face to face with a strange little animal. "What is that?" whispers Flora. "A wully-wully," answers Pom, who always knows everything.

As Flora and Pom have been introduced in the opening statement, quote preposing can apply.

(ii) The second principle might be connected to the previous one: If the writer finds it important to specify to whom the sentence is said, a prequote position is preferred. I say preferred, because there were 2 cases (out of 97) where this information occured in a postquote position as well. Still, there seems to be a strong tendency to have a prequote-frame if it seems important in the story to specify to whom the sentence was said, as in the following examples:

(18) Spiteful old Rataxes maliciously says to his friend General Pamir, "Hah, hah, hah! Pretty soon we'll tweak the ears of this young King Babar . . ." (The Travels of Babar)

(19) Babar calls to Celeste, "Come and see the inhabitants of this soft planet . . ." (Babar Visits Another Planet)

(20) Above them Arthur calls to his friend Zephir, "This planet is amazing isn't it?" (ibid)

(21) Babar tells the porter, "Be careful with that bag . . ." (Babar Loses His Crown)

In (18) and (21) the addressee is introduced into the story for the first time, and this might be an additional reason for having the quotation frame precede the quote.

(iii) In contrast to the cases above, where the order of frame-quote seems to be motivated by principles which are connected to the structure of the narrative, there also seem to be purely syntactic reasons for positioning the frame before the quote. Two such syntactic reasons can be distinguished:

(a) If the sentence which contains the direct quote is conjoined to a previous sentence, the writer might choose to apply conjunction reduction and thus avoid having to repeat the subject in the quotation frame. In this case the quote cannot be preposed, as this would destroy the syntactic parallelism needed for conjunction reduction. In other words, in order to be able to conjoin the sentence containing the quote to a previous sentence, the frame must come first. Thus one can have (22) but not (23).

(22) John opened the door and said, "Go away!"

(23) John opened the door and "Go away!" said.

Examples from the Babar stories are given below:

(24) Babar watches them and thinks, "It's really amazing . . ." (Babar and the Wully-Wully)

(25) The mustache man smiles and says, "I can play a flute but I can't play a crown." (Babar Looses His Crown)

(26) Babar is concerned and says to himself, "Maybe they think that Arthur burst the balloon on purpose" (Babar Visits Another Planet)

(27) They all follow him shouting, "Stop, please, Mr. Mustache!" (Babar Loses His Crown)

In some cases, as in (27) above the action of shouting occurs simultaneously within the action mentioned in the first conjunct; i.e., the writer wants to express that the elephants follow the mystery man and shout at the same time. Preposing the quote blocks the reduction, and we are left with two separate sentences as in (28):

(28) They all follow him. "Stop, please, Mr. Mustache," they shout.

Sentence (28) does not entail that the following and the shouting occur simultaneously, although it does not rule out this possibility either.

In other cases it is not entirely clear why the writer decided to have a conjunction instead of having two or more separate sentences; but whatever the reason for this decision is, it has a syntactic effect on the order of the constituents in the sentence containing the quote.

(b) Similar to the conjunction cases are sentences where the writer (for certain pragmatic effects) decided to apply adverb preposing. The reason for preposing an adverb or a whole adverbial clause probably has to do with the writer's desire to convey certain setting information. The preposed adverb/adverbial clause functions as a connective device between the clause which follows and the preceding narrative, and it sets the sentence (which in this case contains the quote) in a certain

time and space. Again, the writer's choice of preposing the adverbial clause has the effect of requiring the whole frame to precede the quote. Compare (29a) and (29b) below:

(29)(a) After he has heard the whole story, the little monkey says, "Arthur, let's go on a search." (Babar and the Wully-Wully)

(b) After he has heard the whole story, "Arthur, let's go on a search" the little monkey says.

Again as in the cases in (24-27) above, if the writer chose to prepose part of the sentence containing the quote, the whole frame must precede the quote. It is a separate and perhaps more interesting question why preposing the adverbial clause is necessary. Presumably it is important for the understanding of the quote to know first when and where it was uttered. If the adverbial were not preposed, it would not function as a setting device, and the quote itself might seem pretty obscure. For example, (29a) appears in the story in the following context:

(30) They rush back to the garden to find Zephir. "You must help us," says Pom. After he has heard the whole story, the little monkey says, "Arthur, Let's go on a search." (Babar and the Wully-Wully)

In the above story, the preposed adverbial serves as a temporal setting and connective device; i.e., it fills in the information that Zephir was told the whole story. Notice that in real time sequence this precedes Zephir's response (Let's go on a search). If the adverb does not precede the quote (as in (31) below) the logical time sequence is not kept and

the connection between Pom's request for help and Zephir's answer becomes less clear:

(31) They rush back to the garden to find Zephir, "You must help us," says Pom. "Arthur, let's go on a search," the little monkey says, after he has heard the whole story.

In conclusion, in cases where for independent reasons part of the frame such as the adverbial clause is preposed, the whole frame must appear before the quote, as the frame seems to constitute a syntactic unit which cannot be interrupted by the quote.

Other examples from the Babar stories where the adverbial clause has been preposed are given below:

(32) Before following them on the slides, Babar replies, "Sir, one doesn't just pick up people in a rocket like this without warning." (Babar Visits Another Planet)

(33) Suddenly Rataxes cries, "Arthur, you rascal! I recognize you!" (Babar and the Wully-Wully)

(34) Suddenly Zephir shouts, "Babar, look! Up on the bridge!" (Babar Loses His Crown)

(35) But then he suddenly calls out, "Look! Some of the inhabitants are approaching." (Babar Visits Another Planet)

In (33-35) we have the adverb <u>suddenly</u> in sentence initial position. Clearly, if the writer wants to inform the reader that there is an unexpected development in the story, it would be highly infelicitous to <u>first</u> cite the quote and <u>then</u> remark that it was sudden or unexpected,

because this would take away much of the effect of the suddeness or unexpectedness conveyed by the adverb. Again, as the adverb cannot be separated from the rest of the frame, the whole frame must precede the quote.

This concludes my discussion of what determines the ordering of quotation frame and quote. I hope to have shown the following: (a) The usual unmarked order is for the quote to appear before the quotation frame, as this gives the impression of the dialogue being much more like a natural conversation. (b) If the quotation frame contains more information than just the name of the speaker and the mode of saying and due to the structure of the narrative this information has to appear in sentence initial position--the frame will precede the quote.

Note that it is not a valid generalization to claim that if the frame contains any extra information in addition to the name of the speaker and verb of saying the frame will precede the quote. Thus, as Green (1978) remarks, it is not a mere matter of syntactic complexity or gross semantic baggage, as quotes can be preposed even if the frame is long and complex, as in (36) (Green's example).

(36) "I'm going to New Orleans!" said Tom, his eyes aglow at the thought of this unhoped-for opportunity to spend the rest of the winter in a place that was not only exciting and alive, but far from the bitter cold and chill winds of Fargo.

Rather, in the above example no new characters or settings are introduced and thus none of the factors which would impose a frame-quote order hold. Consequently, we get the unmarked 'quotation first' order. Additional examples, where we get a fairly long and syntactically complex frame following a quote, but where the quotation frame does not contain any of the elements which would force it to appear before the quote, are given below.

(37) "Oh, I like the bird's house better," says Flora, as she looks at the little duck out of the corner of her eye. (Babar's Fair)

(38) "Courage, Celeste!" calls Babar, as he balances himself sitting in the edge of his perch. (Babar Visits Another Planet)

Inversions Versus Non-Inversions

Syntactically, the occurrence of subject verb inversion (SVI) is restricted to sentences where quote preposing has applied, i.e., I did not find any examples where SVI applied in a prequote.

Another restriction, which seems to hold for inversion cases, is the fact that subject pronouns can never invert over the verb. Thus we get (39a), but not (39b).

(39)(a) "What an adventure," moans Celeste.

(b) "What an adventure, moans she.

It is not entirely clear to me whether this is a purely syntactic restriction, identical to restriction on other kinds of SVI, as shown below:

(40)(a) SVI after adverb preposing:

Around the bend came { the train. / it }

(b) SVI after participial phrase preposing:

Sitting on the porch was { a little girl / she }

Possibly, the restriction on inverting subject pronouns will directly follow from the function of SVI as discussed below.

What then is the function of the inversion in quotation frames which follow the quote? Note that in postquotes, the inversion puts the subject in final position. Thus, it seems to rearrange information so that the name of the speaker would be in a more focus-like position than the verb. The writer, then, seems to exploit some general pragmatic principle such as the Pragueian theme--rheme (or "old information first--new information last") principle. The verb of saying is generally completely predictable anyway, and thus contains no important or new information, whereas the name of the speaker is not always predictable. If this is indeed the function of the inversion, we would predict the following principles governing inversion:

(i) If the verb is not simply <u>say</u> or <u>answer</u>, i.e., if it is semantically more complex, we should not be able to invert, as the verb adds important information.

Indeed, Fowler when talking about 'bad' inversions, claims that "only such insignificant verbs as said, replied, continued will submit to being dragged about like this" (Fowler, p. 293), where by "dragged about" he means inverted.

Fowler remarks that verbs which express a more complicated notion, or that cannot rightly take a speech as an object "stand on their dignity and insight on their proper place" (p. 293). Thus he cites as bad the following:

(41) "No signore;" disavowed Don Abroggio.

(42) "Yes," moodily consented John, "I suppose we must."

Looking at the data from the Babar books, we could indeed conclude that in cases like the following inversion did not occur because the verb is not a simple verb of saying:

(43)(a) "This is very ingenious," Babar observes. (Babar Visits Another Planet)

(b) "I'd like very much to have a machine like that," Zephir thinks. "It's like a fire engine" (ibid)

(c) "I'll ask him what's the matter," Babar decides. "Maybe I can find out what's going on." (ibid)

(d) "You aren't hurt, Celeste, are you?" Babar inquires anxiously." No! Well then look, we are saved!" (The Travels of Babar)

(e) "Little ones, oh little ones, where are you hiding?" the clowns repeat. (ibid)

(f) "Sh!" Zephir warns. (Babar and the Wully-Wully)

However, if we look at the inverted cases we find verbs which seem to be as complex as the ones in (43), but where SVI applies:

(44)(a) "What an adventure!" moans Celeste. (Babar Visits Another Planet)

(b) "Well here is a very comfortable place," sighs Celeste, as she settles down. (ibid)

(c) "Let's all go to the restaurant and calm our nerves" suggests Arthur. (Babar's Fair)

(d) "We were better off on the Cannibal Island. What will become of us now?" whispers poor Celeste . . . ." (The Travels of Babar)

(e) "Get away old Cornelius," grumbles Rataxes. "Don't speak to me of that scoundrel Arthur." (ibid)

(f) "What's going on here" inquires Babar, who has found the other elephants at last. (ibid)

Thus, the semantic complexity of the verb does not seem to block the inversion. Worse, the same verb can appear in both an inverted and noninverted frame as inquire above (43a) and (44f) respectively).

Thus, there is no direct relationship between the semantic complexity of the verb and the application of SVI.

What then accounts for the distribution of inverted versus noninverted postquotes?

If we take into consideration that the function of SVI is to rearrange the material in the frame so that new information appears at the end of the frame, the distribution observed in (43-44) becomes clear. Two major factors seem to account for this distribution and both of them follow from the function of SVI.

(i) One principle is discussed in Green (1978). If the verb in the quotation frame does not add any important information to the narrative, i.e., if the verb is completely predictable from the preceding discourse (which includes the quote, as SVI occurs only in sentences where the quote precedes the frame)--the verb does not constitute new information, and is consequently removed from the frame-final position. Let me re-emphasize that it is not the meaning of the verb out of context which is the decisive factor, but whether the verb at that particular point in the story adds new information or not. Clearly there is some overlap between the meaning of the verb and its potential to express new information. For example, verbs like say, ask, answer, exclaim, shout, when following the quote, are usually directly predictable from the quote and the context. Thus, a quote which is an exclamation implies that the quote was shouted, exclaimed or screamed; a quote which is a question implies that the speaker asked or inquired; a declarative quote implies said or answered (if a question preceded the quote), or one of the verbs which mean "say in a particular tone or manner of voice," such as moan, whisper, sigh, grumble, etc. If in a particular narrative it is not crucial to the main line of the story whether the speaker said what he said with a whisper, moan or sigh, these

verbs can invert just as the semantically less complex say inverts. This explains the distribution in (44a-f). For example in Babar Visits Another Planet it is not important whether Celeste sighs, moans, whispers or simply says "What an adventure!" ex: (44a). In such context, this is additional 'coloring' added by the writer to avoid using say all the time.[6] Inquire in (44f) is predictable from the quote (which is a WH-question); suggest in (44c) is directly predictable from the suggestion implied in the quote (Let's all go); grumble in (44e) is predictable from the negative content expressed in the quote and from the previous context (Rataxes being portrayed as an unfriendly and hostile character.)[7]

On the other hand the verbs in (43) are predictable to a much lesser extent. In (43b) thinks is not predictable from the quote, as Zephir could equally well have said this quote aloud, in (43c) decides adds the information that the quote was a decision rather than announcement, warning or promise. In (43e) repeat adds the information that the quote was said more than once. In general then when the verb is not redundant, it stays in the new information slot. A particularly revealing instance of this principle is given in Green (1978). As mentioned above, ask is usually removed from the rheme-slot as it is predictable from the quote, as in (45) below where (a) is much more natural than (b):

(45)(a) "Why do we have to go?," asked the Little Red Hen.

(b) "Why do we have to go?," the Little Red Hen asked.

However, as Green points out, if ask is not inferrable from the preceding quote, it is more natural for ask to appear in the "new information slot,"

and SVI, which would remove it from this slot, is blocked. This explains why in the following example the (b) version, where ask appears in a more presupposed medial position, is odd. The preposed part of the quote is not a question and thus ask is not inferrable from the preceding quote:

(46)(a) "Well," the Little Red Hen asked, 'will you help me take this wheat to the mill, Pig?"

(b) "Well," asked the Little Red Hen, 'will you help me take this wheat to the mill, Pig?"

(Green, 1978, ex. 18)

The second factor determining the distribution of sentences like (43-44) has to do not with the meaning of the verb, but with the occurrence of additional information (such as sentence adverbials, relative clauses) in the quotation frame. Two distinct principles seem to play a role in this distribution.

(a) If the frame contains an adverb or an object which add important information, (again, not directly inferrable from the quote) SVI is blocked as it would remove the adverb (or the object) from the new information slot, since the adverb (or object) usually form a syntactic unit with the verb. (Note that here I am not talking about sentential adverbs, which can be preposed to the beginning of a sentence or clause, but manner adverbs.) Thus in (43d) where the frame contains the adverb anxiously, SVI would remove the adverb from sentence final position. This results in oddness, as in the narrative it is important to know that Babar was anxious about Celeste's well being. Thus (43d) is not a simple question or inquiry,

but the writer wants to express Babar's concern for his wife. Thus (47a) is considerably better than (47b),[8] or (47c), where the verb is separated from its adverbial:

(47)(a) "You aren't hurt, Celeste, are you?," Babar inquires anxiously. (The Travels of Babar)

(b) "You aren't hurt, Celeste, are you?" inquires anxiously Babar.

(c) "You aren't hurt, Celeste, are you?" inquires Babar anxiously.

A clear example of the above principle are sentences where the verb is followed by a direct object (DO). Verbs and their direct objects constitute a syntactic unit which cannot be broken up by positioning the subject between the verb and the DO, thus a V-S-DO order in English is highly marked. This then explains why SVI did not apply in the example below, although the verb itself is redundant:

(48)(a) "Are you angry?" asks Babar his friend, for now they can understand each other. (Babar Visits Another Planet)

(b) "Are you angry?" asks Babar his friend.

(c) "Are you angry?" asks his friend Babar.

Note that (48c) is also impossible, probably due to the reasons mentioned in footnote 8.

(b) If the subject NP contains not just the name of the speaker, but also contains an adverbial clause or relative clause giving some

additional details about the speaker, the whole subject NP tends to be moved to the end of the sentence by SVI.

(49) "What is going on here?" inquires Babar, who has found the other elephants at last. (The Travels of Babar)

(50) "A Wully-Wully," answers Pom, who always knows everything. (Babar and the Wully-Wully)

Although in the above examples the verb is redundant, and thus we expect SVI to apply for that reason, the heavyness or length of the subject is another reason for the application of the rule.[9] Thus, in cases where SVI should be blocked because the verb is nonredundant, if the subject NP is 'heavy' a QVS order as in (51d) is much better than a QSV order (as in (51c)). Contrast the examples below.

(51)(a) "Mary can clean up the house" John proposed.

(b) "Mary can clean up the house" proposed John.

(c) "Mary can clean up the house" John, who was always afraid to be stuck with all the work, proposed.

(d) "Mary can clean up the house," proposed John, who was always afraid to be stuck with all the work.

SVI in (b) seems odd, as it is not directly inferrable from the quote that this is a proposal. In (d) however, where the phrase order is the same but the subject is long, SVI seems much more natural.

(iii) Another fact which could presumably affect inversion is the following: If the speaker is expected to speak or answer, i.e., if it is entirely clear from context who the speaker is, we should not be able to

put the subject in focus (clause final) position by inversion. Possibly, the following could be explained by this principle:

(52) "Papa, that bag looks just like yours!" "Yes, it may be my crown bag," Babar says. "But we must be sure it is the man with the mustache." (Babar Loses His Crown)

In (52) it is clear from the answer who the speaker is, hence the non-inversion.

In Babar and the Wully-Wully we find another example where inversion seems to be blocked by the fact that it is clear from the context who the speaker is. Zephir enters Rataxes' palace and sees Rataxes sleeping and the Wully-Wully tied up. There we find (53):

(53) "Sh!" Zephir warns.

It was clear from context that Zephir is the one speaking (or rather giving the warning to Wully-Wully), thus the non-inversion.

However this principle clearly doesn't work without exceptions. We have quite a few cases where we have a dialogue and know the participants, yet we find inversions, especially with verbs like answer (when it is clear who is doing the answering).

Let me summarize the discussion on SVI at this point. I have shown above that the difference between a QSV and a QVS order follows from a number of principles, which in turn are closely connected to the pragmatic function of SVI. These principles all were connected to discourse (or rather narrative) structure and to the writer's exploitation of the Pragueian principle of "old information first-new information last," and are summarized below:

(i) If the verb, or the verb in conjunction with its adverbs, add crucial information to the narrative, and cannot be inferred from the preceding quote--the verb (or verb and adverb) will stay in the new information slot (clause final), and SVI is blocked.

(ii) If the subject (name of the speaker) is completely predictable (as in the case where it is clear from the dialogue who is saying the quote) there is a tendency not to apply SVI, as SVI would again put redundant information in the new information slot. In contrast, if the subject is especially heavy, SVI will apply, shifting the heavy NP into the rhematic position. Thus SVI applies in all cases where the verb is redundant information, and the name of the speaker is, relative to the verb, new or non-redundant information.[10] As in most cases, when reporting a dialogue, one uses verbs like say, ask, whisper, etc. which are predictable from context and hence redundant (in the sense discussed above), we tend (at least in children's literature) to get a very high proportion of cases where SVI has applied. This is supported by the figures from the Babar books; out of 97 postquotes, 66 are inverted and 31 noninverted. Out of 31 noninverted forms 21 are due to pronoun subjects blocking SVI. Thus we are left with 10 sentences (around 10%) where SVI did not apply because the verb was not redundant.

The above principles also explain why SVI is blocked where we have a pronoun as the name of the speaker. Using a pronoun to refer to the speaker assumes that it is clear from the preceding narrative who the speaker is. Because the speaker's name is redundant information SVI is blocked, in order not to violate the theme-rheme order.[11]

Conclusions

The central claim of this paper is that the direct quotation constructions described above have different pragmatic functions, which the author of a narrative exploits for particular communicative purposes. Thus for example, the author exploits the principle of "old information first--new information last" to signal to his reader that certain information (e.g., the subject NP which he puts in the new information slot) is more important for the development of the narrative than other information (e.g., the verb which the subject inverts over). Another example is the author's use of adverb preposing (which in this case moves the whole quotation frame to the beginning, and creates a SVQ order) to signal crucial setting information.

The claim is, then, that a writer uses his knowledge or intuitions about pragmatics in communicating with his readers. It is interesting to see what happens if one of these pragmatic principles is violated. For example, in Babar and the Wully-Wully, we have following discourses:

(54) "Just you wait, Rataxes," threatens Zephir. "I am going to get into your city." (Babar and the Wully-Wully)

Now, the inversion here is predicted, as threaten is inferrable from what Zephir said, i.e., just you wait implies that this is a threat. Note however that if SVI does not apply, we do not get an ungrammatical sentence, only a lower degree of acceptability:

(55) "Just you wait, Rataxes," Zephir threatens. "I am going to get into your city."

In other words, the principles discussed for SVI above seem to predict under what circumstances SVI is possible. If SVI does not apply, although the conditions for its application are met, we get only a slight unacceptability.

Moreover, it seems that the generalization about SVI do not hold for other styles of narrative, such as news-writing for example. George A. Hough in his book on news-writing claims that 90% of all quotation frames in news-writing (speech tags in his terminology) preserve the normal English word order (i.e., the subject first order). Moreover, as Hough remarks, experienced news-writers prefer to use the verb say and avoid variations, whenever possible (i.e., whenever the situation does not call for the use of verbs with particular meanings). He explains, that say has an unequivocal and limited meaning, and if all you want to do is tag a quote and identify the speaker, it is the ideal verb to use, as it does not overload the reader with surplus information.

Note that according to the principles discussed above which follow from the function of SVI, say should trigger SVI exactly because of the fact that it has such a limited, redundant meaning. (In fact, that is what we observed in the Babar books). News-writing, however, seems to disregard these principles. Possibly, this is due to that fact that news-writing serves a different communicative purpose than children's stories, namely to report certain events or facts. When using direct quotes the reporter wants the reader to concentrate on the content of the quote, and therefore tries to keep the frame as inconspicuous as possible. At least from

Hough, I get the impression that news-writers think that a deviation from the subject-first 'normal' English word order will draw the reader's attention to the frame and slow him down. This consideration (whether it is justified or not) could then override the principles which sanction SVI in children's literature.

We have to limit our conclusions then, to children's literature. It seems, however, that even individual writers differ in their use of quote-preposing and SVI. Thus, for example, J. Kerr in Mog the Forgetful Cat uses only prequotes of the form X said " . . . . ," while other writers for the same age group (pre-school) freely use both pre- and postquotes. P.D. Eastman's Are You My Mother has inverted postquotes with the verb say.[12] Our conclusions then have to possibly be limited to a specific style, and to those writers who actually use the various quote-types in their stories.

Implications for Research on Reading

Reading research is interested in, among other things, the question of which syntactic constructions contribute to the overall complexity of a text. An example is the Syntactic Complexity Formula designed by Botel, Dawkins and Granowsky, (see Granowsky & Botel, 1974) which calculates the syntactic complexity of a text by averaging the syntactic complexity of its component sentences. However, as in other readability formulas, the complexity is viewed as a property of each individual sentence and not of connected discourse. (For a criticism of readability formula see Freeman (1978)). As a result, some complexity formulas count the sentences in a

text which do not follow the English subject-initial canonical word order as complex, and therefore sentences with quote preposing and SVI will be considered as more complex than sentences which have a frame-quote (SVO) order. As I have tried to show in this paper, however, the choice of the type of direct quote depends on the structure of the text itself. Thus in certain contexts a prequote type is preferred, whereas in other contexts a postquote is preferred. Therefore, preposing the quote per se, does not seem to make the text harder to understand; and it is only in certain contexts (as the beginning of a story or new scene) that quote preposing might reduce comprehensibility, and is therefore avoided.

In conclusion, in order to be able to reach a more refined method of measuring syntactic complexity of texts, researchers have to be aware not only of the syntactic structures of sentences, but also of the discourse function of sentence types. Any complexity formula which calculates complexity as an attribute of sentences in isolation is therefore doomed to failure. As a result, what is needed at this stage is descriptions of the functions of various sentence types in context. This paper should be viewed as an attempt of this kind.

Many questions are left unanswered in this paper. In particular, it would be interesting to see if the variation in direct quote types found in children's literature is also found in other styles of narrative.[13] Does oral story telling differ from written narrative in this respect? What additional pragmatic or discourse factors determine the place of the

quote and of the subject in the quotation frame? Do different cultures or literary traditions prefer different types of direct quotes? I hope to have shown that these questions are worth investigating, as the various quote types are not produced by the writer at random, just for the sake of greater variety.

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Footnotes

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[1] In this study I limited myself to the types of quotes found in childrens literature. Linguists generally agree that direct quotes of the type exemplified in (2)-(3) do not occur in spoken English (see for example, Hall-Partee (1973)). In fact the only types of direct quotes which are used in conversational English are (1) above and possibly (i) below; a form generally found in rural colloquial narrative and certain types of TV and radio news reports:

(i) Quipped Johnny "Who needs fat bunny rabbits anyway?"

[2] A problem not discussed in this paper is the question of what part of the quote can be preposed, i.e., I generally disregard the difference between preposing the whole quote versus preposing part of quote, as I believe that in both cases the preposing serves the same function. In general, it seems that if the quote is of considerable length (more than one clause) there is a tendency to prepose only the first clause or part of it.

[3]It may be misleading to talk about a rule of quote preposing, as this seems to imply that prequotes are somehow more basic and postquotes are syntactically derived. This is in fact the view held by linguists like Emonds and Hoooper and Thompson who discuss the rule of quote preposing (see Emonds (1970) and Hopper & Thompson (1973)). While I find it convenient to talk about a rule of quote preposing, I do not wish to imply that postquotes are necessarily transformationally derived from prequotes. I view all the various types of quotes as parallel constructions exhibiting various word orders, and find it meaningless to view the SVQ order as more basic or 'less marked' than the QVS/QSV orders. As a matter of fact, if we assume that frequency of occurrence has something to do with basic word order, the opposite facts would hold: out of the 130 quotes found in the five Babar books 77% were QVS/QSV and only 33% where SVQ.

[4]It should be pointed out that throughout this paper when talking about the authors intentions I mean the reader's interpretation of the apparent intentions of the author. In other words, when I claim that the writer is interested in communicating X, I mean that the text leads the reader to believe that the intention of the author is to communicate X. Naturally, there could be a discrepancy between what the author really intended and what the reader believes the author intended, but such a discrepancy is irrelevant to the topic of this paper.

[5]I do not discuss the problem whether SVI in direct quotes is the same rule as SVI after adverb preposing or participial phrase preposing. For a discussion of this problem see Green (1978) especially pp. 27-28.

[6]Clearly, I do not mean to imply that all the verbs of saying are synonymous, only that in a certain context the differences in meaning are not crucial. It is only in such cases that subject-verb inversion can occur.

[7]Other examples, where the verb is predictable from the meaning of the quote, or from the inferences made by the quote, are the following:

(i) a. "Watch out!" cries Zephir, "Be careful, Arthur" (Babar Visits Another Planet)

b. "There he is!" yells Arthur, "The man with your crown." (Babar Loses His Crown)

c. "Bring back my crown!" shouts Babar. (ibid)

d. "Oh, my," sighs Babar "All those people will see me . . . " (ibid)

In (i a-c) one can infer from the content of the quote that it was said in a loud voice, as one usually shouts 'watch out" so as to make the warning more effective. Moreover, the text contains an exclamation mark, which is a clear sign that the quote was said in a loud, emphatic voice (commands and threats usually are). "Oh my" in (i d) is the conventional way to express a worry, and since the sounds oh is onomatopoeic with a sigh, the verb sigh really is redundant information. I have examined all cases of QVS order in the five Babar books, and all inverted verbs without exception, seem to be predictable from the preceding discourse (usually from the quote which immediately precedes the frame).

[8]Another syntactic factor seems to play a role here. It seems that SVI can invert over the verb only. Thus the subject has to go directly after the verb, compare (i(a)) to (i(b)):

(i) a. "I don't know what to do," said Mary to her husband.

b. "I don't know what to do," said to her husband Mary.

[9]Green (1978) points out that such accounts of inversion, which say that inversion can apply if the subject NP is sufficiently long, may have the cart before the horse. Rather, Green suggest, SVI is a stylistic option which enables the writer to have longer NP's and thus pack more information into the sentence.

[10]Although I talk about <u>one</u> rule of SVI, I have discussed two distinct functions connected to the QVS word order: (i) one function is removing the verb from the new information slot, (ii) another is to put the subject in the new information slot. These are then two distinct motivations.

[11]I am not claiming here that this is a synchronic explanation of the ungramaticality of these sentences, but rather that it may be the historical explanation for how such sentences came to be ungrammatical.

[12]J. Kerr's book seems to be very stylized, using strict SVO order. This gives the book a special rhythm, probably intended for reading aloud. Undoubtedly, we are dealing here with different styles of writing for pre-schoolers.

[13]Green (1978) provides excellent examples of how some inversion constructions are used in particular styles of writing and oral reporting. It seems that particular styles exploit inversion in order to serve the

specific function of the reporter. Thus play-by-play sports announcers take advantage of inversions to buy time before they have to name the agent of the reported action. The writers of news stories prepose certain predicate phrases (which in turn triggers inversion) to perform a connective function by indicating why the individuals listed in the postposed subject position are relevant or important in the story.

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